IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE, ANDHRA PRADESH
AT HYDERABAD

(Special Original Jurisdiction)

THURSDAY, THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF OCTOBER
TWO THOUSAND AND FOUR

PRESENT

THE HON'BLE MR JUSTICE V.V.S.RAO

-

WRIT PETITION No.10509 of 2001

Between:

Majeti Panduranganath, S/o. Punnaiah, aged 51 years,

Business, R/o.5-49-13/A, 5/13, Brodiepet, Guntur –2.

..... PETITIONER

AND

The Commissioner, Guntur Municipal Corporation,

Guntur.

.....RESPONDENT

Petition under Article 226 of the constitution of India praying that in the circumstances stated in the Affidavit filed herein the High Court may be pleased to issue a writ of Mandamus or any other writ, order of direction in the nature of writ, declaring the action of the respondent in proposing to demolish the property bearing No.5-37-248 situated at Main Road, 4th line, Brodiepet, Guntur for alleged road widening without acquiring the same under the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act and without any notice as arbitrary, illegal and violative of Article 300-A of the Constitution of India and consequently to direct the respondent not to demolish the same.

Counsel for the Petitioner: MR.G.PEDDA BABU

Counsel for the Respondent: MR.T.S.VENKATARAMANA

The Court made the following:

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ORDER:

The petitioner alleges that he is the owner of the house bearing Door No.5-37-248 situated at Main Road, 4th line, Brodiepet, Guntur. He filed this writ petition alleging that on 18.5.2001 the staff of the respondent came to the locality and marked to demolish about 10 feet of his house on south-east corner for the purpose of widening the road. Therefore, the petitioner submits that any such action without due process of law under the provisions of the Hyderabad Municipal Corporations Act, 1955 or the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 or other laws is arbitrary and illegal.

In the counter affidavit filed by the respondent, it is stated that the Corporation will take appropriate action following due process of law.

Heard the learned Standing Counsel for the respondent – Municipal Corporation.

In **P. Lakshmana Rao v. Executive Officer,** a Division Bench of this Court issued directions to be followed by Municipal authorities, Panchayat authorities and Revenue authorities for acquiring the land for public purpose. Having regard to the decision of the Division Bench, I have considered similar issue in a number of writ petitions and culled out various principles of law to be followed by the Government while acquiring/utilizing the private land for road widening. The principles were reiterated by my learned brother, Sri Justice B.Sudershan Reddy in **M.Madhavi Latha v. Rajendranagar Municipality**. The principles laid down by the Division Bench are as follows.

(1). Where a property is required for public purpose viz., widening of roads or for any other purpose, the authorities straightaway cannot take law into their hands and jump into the premises, dispossess or evict the occupants or demolish the property.

(2). If the authorities concerned want to take action for eviction/dispossession of the occupants or demolition, they shall issue 60 days' prior notice notifying as to the nature of the property, the property to whom it belongs and the proposed action calling for explanation/objections, if any, from the occupants. On receipt of such objections, if there is any objection as to the ownership of the property, the authorities should determine the extent of encroachment or unauthorised occupation

and also determine whether the property in question belongs to Government/any other local self Government or authority or the occupants and pass appropriate orders within three months from the date of receipt of the objections, after affording an opportunity of being heard to the occupants.

(3). In case where demolition of private property has already been made, the authorities shall determine the damages on the basis of the assessment to be made by the Engineer of the Roads and Buildings Department and disburse the amount of damages quantified forthwith.

(4). If the demolition is in respect of local bodies' Government property, the question of damages does not arise. In such an event, the occupant shall be entitled to remove the material used for the construction.

(5). In case of demolition of private property, the authorities concerned shall determine the loss caused to the occupants on the basis of the assessment to be made by the Engineer of R&B Department and on such assessment of damages, the concerned authorities shall take appropriate steps to disburse the amount quantified forthwith.

(6). If there is any claim for grant/assessment of the property, the concerned authorities shall consider the same in accordance with law taking into consideration the eligibility and the entitlement of occupants, after making enquiry and till such claim is decided, there shall be status quo obtaining as on today regarding the structures.

The writ petition is disposed of as above directing maintenance of status quo as on today. No costs.

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October 14, 2004. **V.V.S.RAO, J**

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To

1. The Commissioner, Guntur Municipal Corporation, Guntur.
2. Two C.D. Copies.